



# Press Release

Lake County Sheriff's Office  
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## PRESS RELEASE

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### ATV Operational Guidelines

ATVs (All-Terrain Vehicles) are extremely popular, and of course fun to operate. Out west and in larger rural areas there are many trails and designated areas on which to enjoy this recreational sport. However, everyone needs to understand that ATV's do not have unlimited access to travel on private property and area roadways, and that operational guidelines must be followed for the safety of the riders, as well as the other people they encounter while traveling.

ATV's are motorized vehicles and their operators must comply with motor vehicle laws. Just as with driving a car it is critical to understand that you may not drink alcohol and operate an ATV, whether on public roads or on private property. Any person operating an ATV under the influence of alcohol (OVI) can be arrested, charged with a criminal offense, and incarcerated.

Any person operating an ATV on a public roadway must have the ATV registered with the State, licensed, and the driver must have a valid operator's license. Further, at night the ATV must have working headlights, tail lights and turn signals. During the day operators must at a minimum use hand signals for turning. However, at night, when one cannot see in the dark there must be working lights on the licensed ATV.

In the townships here in Lake County many ATV riders see an open field or large nursery and believe that these areas can be used to move from one area to another. As well, they falsely believe that railroad tracks are public access. All of these areas are private property, and riders need the permission of the land owners to ride on that property. Without such permission the ATV rider is trespassing on private property and subject to being charged. Popular areas frequented by ATV's such as railroad tracks, the large area near *Just Teazin'* in Painesville Township, as well as areas off Mantle Road and Fairport Nursery Road are private property. Riders on these properties are trespassing and will be cited.

Although the State of Ohio has laws detailing the use of ATV's on public lands and private property, it is important that riders equally understand that cities, municipalities and villages have ordinances that specifically apply to their areas. ATV riders must be familiar with these guidelines and laws as well.

Finally, everyone must understand that ATV's are motorized vehicles that can reach significant speeds. Drivers and riders need to use safety equipment such as helmets and goggles to help prevent serious injury. Serious head and brain injuries due to accidents on ATV's is more common than one thinks, so every driver should be knowledgeable of operational rules and safety concerning ATV operation.

As with any motorized vehicle safety is key to enjoying its use. Personal responsibility is critical in knowing the rules and laws for ATV use to insure the not only the riders' safety, but the safety and personal rights of all of the people they encounter on their travels.

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